

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for maintaining compatibility between nodes within a distributed systems management environment, comprising:

a ~~primary~~ master node, said ~~primary~~ master node including a primary storage area, said primary storage area including at least two primary storage sections; and

a plurality of ~~secondary~~ slave nodes, each ~~secondary~~ slave node of said plurality of ~~secondary~~ slave nodes configured with a plurality of configuration settings having a first format, and each ~~secondary~~ slave node of said plurality of ~~secondary~~ slave nodes including a secondary storage area, wherein said ~~primary~~ master node is operable to:

read said plurality of configuration settings having said first format from a first primary storage section of said at least two primary storage sections;

transform said plurality of configuration settings having said first format to a plurality of configuration settings having a second format;

write said plurality of configuration settings having said second format to a second primary storage section of said at least two primary storage sections; and

convey said plurality of configuration settings having said second format from said second primary storage section to each said secondary storage area of said plurality of ~~secondary~~ slave nodes, wherein said convey operation comprises a synch out operation; and wherein each said ~~secondary~~ slave node of said plurality of ~~secondary~~ slave nodes is operable to:

receive said plurality of configuration settings having said second format; and

reconfigure in accordance with said plurality of configuration settings having said second format, wherein said first format comprises a WebSphere version 5.x format, and said second format comprises a WebSphere 6.x format, and further wherein said plurality of configuration settings having said first format comprises at least one 5.x XSL schema document, and said plurality of configuration settings having said second format comprises at least one 6.x XSL schema document.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said primary storage area comprises a master repository, and said secondary storage area comprises a node repository.

5-7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said ~~primary~~ master node and said plurality of ~~secondary~~ slave nodes comprise a plurality of data processing units.

9. (Currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said ~~primary~~ master node and said plurality of ~~secondary~~ slave nodes comprise a plurality of servers.

10. (Currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said ~~primary~~ master node and said plurality of ~~secondary~~ slave nodes comprise a cell.

11-20. (Canceled)